

CHOOSING YOUR KNITTING NEEDLES

NOTE: This Tip Sheet focuses on the most commonly used type - a pair of straight single-pointed needles. I will do a separate sheet on other needle types

An Anti-Craft Tip Sheet

Knitting patterns will provide instructions on the needles you need for your item, but this will only be the size (diameter) you need. For example, "a pair of 4mm needles"

Knitting needles can be made from a range of different materials; the four most common are shown below. Experienced knitters will usually have a personal favourite, and some yarns or garments may require a specific needle type.

However, the tips below are about the knitting experience. They are things that would have saved me a lot of frustration (and money) if I had known them before I started buying lots of knitting needles.

Aluminium



Plastic



Wood



Bamboo



What do they feel like?

You are going to spend many, many hours with your knitting needles in your hands.

It is super important to consider the sensory issues:

- how does the substance feel against your skin? (does it feel smooth and comfortable? does it feel too cold or too hot?)
- how does the weight of the needles feel to you? (after several hours will they feel too heavy, or too light?)

What do they sound like?

Knitting needles make a sound when they touch each other (that means on each and every stitch)

Choosing the right needles means this will be a sound that you find rhythmic and soothing - and your knitting will be a relaxing from the chaotic world

Choosing the wrong needles could mean this is a sound that irritates and grates on you - and really detracts from the joy of knitting

How resilient are they?

If you are anything like me, you may have issues with proprioception (knowing where your body is in space or how much strength you are using).

Things to consider:

- are you likely to sit on your knitting needles?
- are you likely to press too hard on your knitting needles?

I tend to use hardwood needles because they don't snap (like bamboo) or bend (like plastic)

#1 Tip:

Before you go out and buy lots of knitting needles, buy (or borrow) a pair of each of the four types.

Spend an evening knitting with each pair and see which makes you feel the most relaxed.



What do they look like?

Some knitting needles come in a different colour for each size. This makes it easy to find the other half to your pair, and to make sure you don't accidentally pick up the wrong one halfway through your knitting and use odd-sized needles. If you are a visual person, it also means you can have the joy of lining up all the colours.